(d) and (e) Yes. There is a likelihood of this military hardware being used against India. These concerns have been conveyed to the Russian authorities.

Anti-India Activities in Bangladesh

1634. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have had reports in early January this year about Al-Quaeda and ISI operatives engaged in anti-India terrorist activities, operating from Bangladesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) to (c) The Government periodically gets reports regarding activities of ISI including from Bangladesh. The Government has also seen reports regarding the presence of Al-Qaeda elements in Bangladesh. The Government has shared its concerns over these activities with the Government of Bangladesh. The Government of Bangladesh has assured that it would not allow its territory to be used for any anti-Indian activities.

"No First Use" of Nuclear Weapons Policy

1635. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any other nuclear weapon status country has declared 'No First Use' as its policy as has been declared by India;

(b) if so, the names of the countries;

(c) if not, whether India would reconsider its "No First Use" policy in view of threats by a neighbouring country; and

(d) whether necessary precautions have been taken to meet nuclear attacks on India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes. China has declared

that it would not be the first to use nuclear weapons and would not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states.

(c) Does not arise in view of above.

(d) Government constantly reviews all developments that have bearing on India's security environment and is committed to taking all necessary steps to safeguard nation's security.

Impact of Tendu Leaves Policy on Beedi Workers

†1636. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of the impact of Tendu Leave Policy framed by the Madhya Pradesh Government on beedi workers;

(b) whether the beedi workers of the State have been benefited from this policy;

(c) whether the efforts made to protect these beedi workers from the exploitation have provided any relief; and

(d) the Central schemes for the beedi workers and whether they have been actually benefited from these schemes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) and (b) Madhya Pradesh Government had decided to collect and trade tendu leaves through Co-operative societies since 1989. All the income from the trade of Minor Forest Produces including Tendu leaves is passed on to these societies who in turn distribute 50% of this net income as incentive wages to the gatherers of leaves. The balance amount is utilized for the development of forests, forest produce and infrastructures in the villages. This policy is applicable for tendu leaf collectors only. However, the beedi workers who are also collecting tendu leaves and are members of the co-operative societies are availing benefits under the tendu leave policy. From the infrastructure created at village level, all the villagers including beedi workers are benefited.

(c) Government have enacted Beedi & Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966 too protect the beedi workers from exploitation and the same is being implemented by the State Governments.

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.